

CLAIMS

- 1 1. An integrated application environment, comprising:
2 a client computer system adapted to communicate with a mainframe computer
3 system, the mainframe computer system in communication with a
4 database holding data about a plurality of customers, wherein the
5 customer data is accessed via a key, the client computer system
6 comprising:
7 a desktop bus adapted to receive the key, store the received key, and
8 provide the stored key;
9 a first application in communication with the desktop bus for receiving as
10 user input data representative of the key, for accessing customer
11 data at the mainframe computer system with the key, and for
12 providing the key to the desktop bus; and
13 a second application in communication with the desktop bus for receiving
14 the key from the desktop bus and for accessing customer data at the
15 mainframe computer system with the key.
- 1 2. The integrated application environment of claim 1, wherein the desktop
2 bus is adapted to hold a plurality of keys for each of a plurality of sessions, and wherein
3 the key provided by the first application to the desktop bus is associated with a particular
4 one of the plurality of sessions.
- 1 3. The integrated application environment of claim 2, wherein the client
2 computer system is coupled to a display for displaying graphical information, the client
3 computer system further comprising:
4 a control bar application adapted to graphically indicate on the display which
5 of the plurality of sessions is active and adapted to enable selection of
6 one of the plurality of sessions.

1 4. The integrated application environment of claim 2, wherein the client
2 computer system is coupled to a display for displaying graphical information, the client
3 computer system further comprising:

4 an information bar displayed on the display, the information bar graphically
5 indicating which of the plurality of sessions is active and adapted to
6 display customer data associated with a key for the active session.

1 5. The integrated application environment of claim 1, wherein the desktop
2 bus provides the key to the second application responsive to an occurrence of a pre-
3 specified event.

1 6. The integrated application environment of claim 1, wherein the second
2 application is designated as "hot."

1 7. The integrated application environment of claim 6, wherein the desktop
2 bus provides the key to the second application responsive to receipt of the key from the
3 first application.

1 8. The integrated application environment of claim 1, wherein the second
2 application is designated as "cold."

1 9. The integrated application environment of claim 8, wherein the desktop
2 bus provides the key to the second application responsive to the second application
3 gaining focus.

1 10. The integrated application environment of claim 1, further comprising:
2 a bus interface component associated with the first application for enabling
3 communications between the first application and the desktop bus.

1 11. The integrated application environment of claim 10, wherein the bus
2 interface component is a language-specific proxy between the first application and the
3 desktop bus.

1 12. The integrated application environment of claim 11, wherein there are a
2 plurality of bus interface components for enabling a plurality of applications developed
3 with a plurality of different development languages to communicate with the desktop bus.

1 13. The integrated application environment of claim 10, wherein the bus
2 interface component comprises:
3 a color bar module for graphically indicating whether the first application is
4 displaying customer data associated with the key stored by the desktop
5 bus.

1 14. The integrated application environment of claim 1, wherein the first and
2 second applications are retrieved from an application server in communication with the
3 client computer system.

1 15. A computer program product comprising:
2 a computer-usable medium having computer-readable code embodied therein
3 for providing an integrated application environment, the computer-
4 readable code comprising:
5 a desktop bus module for receiving a key, the key identifying customer
6 data accessible from a remote computer system, storing the key,
7 and providing the key responsive to an occurrence of a pre-
8 specified event; and
9 a bus interface module for enabling communications between an
10 application program and the desktop bus module, the bus interface
11 module adapted to provide the key to the desktop bus module and
12 receive the key from the desktop bus module.

1 16. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein the desktop bus
2 module is adapted to hold a plurality of keys for each of a plurality of sessions, and
3 wherein the key provided by the bus interface module to the desktop bus module is
4 associated with a particular one of the plurality of sessions.

1 17. The computer program product of claim 16, further comprising:
2 a control bar module adapted to graphically indicate which of the plurality of
3 sessions is active and adapted to enable selection of one of the plurality
4 of sessions.

1 18. The computer program product of claim 16, further comprising:
2 an information bar module adapted to graphically indicate which of the
3 plurality of sessions is active and display customer data associated
4 with a key for the active session.

1 19. The computer program product of claim 17, wherein, responsive to a
2 selection of one of the plurality of sessions, the desktop bus module is adapted to provide
3 the key associated with the selected session to the bus interface module.

1 20. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein the desktop bus
2 module and bus interface module exchange the key as an extensible markup language
3 (XML) string.

1 21. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein the desktop bus
2 module is adapted to provide the key to the bus interface module responsive to receipt of
3 the key from a different module.

1 22. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein the desktop bus
2 module is adapted to provide the key to the bus interface module responsive to the
3 application program gaining focus.

1 23. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein the bus interface
2 module comprises:
3 a color bar module for graphically indicating whether the application program
4 is displaying customer data associated with the key stored by the
5 desktop bus module.

1 24. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein the bus interface
2 module is a language-specific proxy between the application program and the desktop bus
3 module.

1 25. The computer program product of claim 24, wherein there are a plurality
2 of bus interface modules for enabling a plurality of application programs developed with
3 a plurality of different development languages to communicate with the desktop bus
4 module.

1 26. A method of providing an integrated application environment on a
2 computer system, the method comprising the steps of:
3 receiving, by a first application, data representative of a key, the key
4 identifying data;
5 providing the key from the first application to a centralized store of
6 information;
7 providing the key from the centralized store of information to a second
8 application;
9 retrieving, by the second application, the data identified by the key.

1 27. The method of claim 26, wherein the step of providing the key from the
2 first application to the centralized store of information comprises the step of:
3 providing an extensible markup language (XML) string containing the key
4 from the first application to the centralized store of information.

1 28. The method of claim 26, wherein the step of providing the key from the
2 centralized store of information to the second application is performed substantially
3 immediately after the key is provided from the first application to the centralized store of
4 information.

1 29. The method of claim 26, further comprising the steps of:
2 notifying the second application that data held by the second application is not
3 current; and
4 responsive to the notification, graphically indicating on a display associated
5 with the computer system that the data held by the second application
6 is not current.

1 30. The method of claim 29, further comprising the steps of:
2 notifying the second application to take focus;
3 responsive to receiving the notification to take focus, graphically indicating on
4 the display that the data held by the second application is current;
5 wherein the steps of providing the key from the centralized store of
6 information to the second application and retrieving, by the second
7 application, the data identified by the key, are performed responsive to
8 receiving the notification to take focus.

1 31. The method of claim 26, wherein the centralized store of information is
2 adapted to hold a plurality of keys for each of a plurality of sessions, and wherein the key
3 provided by the first application to the centralized store of information is associated with
4 a particular one of the plurality of sessions.

1 32. The method of claim 31, further comprising the steps of:
2 receiving, by the centralized store of information, data representative of a
3 change from a first session of the plurality of sessions to a second
4 session of the plurality of sessions;

5 providing, from the centralized store of information to the first application
6 responsive to receipt of the session change, a second key associated
7 with the second session;
8 providing, from the centralized store of information to the second application
9 responsive to receipt of the session change, a notification that data held
10 by the second application is not current.

1 33. The method of claim 32, further comprising the steps of:
2 retrieving, by the first application, data identified by the second key; and
3 graphically indicating on a display associated with the client computer system
4 that the data held by the first application is associated with the second
5 session.